

Message Text

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S E C R E T GEORGETOWN 2213

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TAGS: PFOR MOPS CU GY AO

SUBJ: CUBAN MILITARY INTERVENTION IN ANGOLA:REPORT OF
VENEZUELAN AMBASSADOR'S DEMARCHE

REF: STATE 302692; CARACAS 13411

1. AT SOCIAL FUNCTION EVENING DEC 29, VENEZUELAN
AMBASSADOR MARQUEZ TOOK ME ASIDE FOR LENGTHY REVIEW
OF HIS WEEKEND BRIEFING IN CARACAS AND HIS MEETING
THAT MORNING WITH PRIMIN BURNHAM ON MATTER OF CUBAN
AIRLIFT. MARQUEZ APPARENTLY TRIED TO POSTPONE TRIP
UNTIL AFTER NEW YEAR, BUT WAS TOLD PRESIDENT PEREZ
SENDING VENEZUELAN AIR FORCE PLANE TO FETCH HIM.

2. MARQUEZ SAID BURNHAM GAVE HIM CORDIAL RECEPTION
AT COUNTRY RESIDENCE. MARQUEZ SAID HE COUCHED HIS
PRESENTATION IN CONTEXT OF REPRESENTING A GOVT WHICH
HAS CLOSE TIES OF FRIENDSHIP TO BOTH GUYANA AND US.
ON THAT BASIS, GOV WISHED HIM TO SPEAK FRANKLY TO
BURNHAM IN SENSE THAT GOV IS KEENLY AWARE OF IMPORTANCE
USG ATTACHES TO TERMINATING SOVIET/CUBAN
INTERVENTION IN ANGOLA. IN FACT, MARQUEZ CONTINUED, HE
HAD BEEN TOLD THAT GOV FELT USG WOULD GO TO GREAT
LENGTHS TO ACCOMPLISH THAT OBJECTIVE. AS FRIEND OF BOTH
COUNTRIES, THEREFORE, GOV THOUGHT BURNHAM SHOULD WEIGH

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CAREFULLY ALL FACTORS INVOLVED IN POSSIBLE GRANT OF

GUYANESE FACILITIES TO CUBA FOR TIS MILITARY AIRLIFT. MARQUEZ SAID HE NOTED HIS GOVT WAS PARTICULARLY SENSITIVE TO ITS RELATIONS WITH USG JUST NOW BECAUSE OF CRITICAL NEGOTIATIONS REGARDING FUTURE RELATIONS WITH PETROLEUM COMPANIES.

3. AS MARQUEZ RECOUNTED BURNHAM'S REPLY, IT COVERED THE SAME THREE POINTS BURNHAM MADE TO ME. MARQUEZ LIKewise PUT THE QUOTE CRUNCH UNQUOTE QUESTION, I.E. WHAT WILL YOU DO IF THE CUBANS MAKE AN OFFICIAL REQUEST. BURNHAM REFUSED TO MAKE COMMITMENT, HE SAID, BUT ALLUDED TO MY HAVING ASKED SAME QUESTION AS QUOTE OFFENSIVE UNQUOTE. MARQUEZ ENDED ACCOUNT BY SAYING BURNHAM TOLD HIM SPECIAL CABINET MEETING BEING HELD THAT AFTERNOON (29TH) TO GO OVER ANGOLAN SITUATION AND HE WOULD CONTACT MARQUEZ TODAY (30TH) TO GIVE HIM FURTHER REPLY.

4. COMMENT: AS DEPT AND CARACAS WILL REALIZE, MARQUEZ PRESENTATION CERTAINLY RAISES POSSIBILITY THAT USG WILL GO BEYOND MERELY QUOTE APPEAL UNQUOTE TO BURNHAM'S WISDOM AND STATESMANSHIP. I ASKED MARQUEZ TO REPEAT THE FORMULATION DESCRIBING HOW SERIOUSLY USG REGARDS AIRLIFT AND EXTENT TO WHICH WE MIGHT REACT. THE SECOND ROUND CONFIRMED MY ORIGINAL CONSLUSION THAT MARQUEZ COULD ONLY HAVE LEFT BURNHAM WITH THE SUSPICION THAT USG MIGHT EVEN USE FORCE IN EVENT GUYANA ALLOWED CUBAN FLIGHTS TO REFUEL. I HAVE BEEN ASKED TO CALL ON ACTING FONMIN HUBERT JACK THIS MORNING; I WILL REPORT FURTHER THEREAFTER. KREBS

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